

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Chaitanya Dev Sareen et al. Examiner: Long, Andrea Natae
Serial No.: 10/663,291 Group Art Unit: 2176
Filed: September 16, 2003 Docket No.: 60001.0272US01/MS301788.1
Title: User Interface for Context Sensitive Creation of Electronic Mail Message
Handling Rules

AMENDMENT

Mail Stop Amendment
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

In response to the Office Action dated October 4, 2007, please reexamine and reconsider the application in view of the amendments and appended remarks.

Amendments to the Claims are reflected in the listing of claims in this paper.

Remarks/Arguments follow the amendments section of this paper.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing Of Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for providing a user interface for defining an electronic message handling rule, the method comprising:

receiving a request to create the electronic message handling rule, wherein receiving the request to create the electronic message handling rule comprises receiving the request to create the electronic message handling rule from a user interface button displayed within an electronic message reading pane;

in response to the request, identifying a context in which the request to create the electronic message handling rule was received wherein the identified context comprises a context comprising one of the following: reading an electronic mail message, selecting a received electronic mail message, selecting an electronic mail message ready to be sent, creating an electronic mail message, creating an alert subscription, receiving a subscription alert, and selecting a name; and

providing a user interface for defining the electronic message handling rule, wherein the contents of the user interface are customized based on the identified context.

2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the customized user interface for defining the electronic message handling rule comprises one or more user interface objects for defining one or more conditions for the rule and one or more user interface objects for defining one or more actions to be performed if the one or more conditions are satisfied.

3. (Original) The method of Claim 2, wherein the one or more user interface objects for defining one or more conditions for the rule are a subset of all of the possible conditions for the rule.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[4]] 2, wherein the one or more user interface objects for defining the one or more conditions for the rule comprise a user interface object for setting a condition for the rule based on the identity of a sender of the received electronic mail message.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[4]] 2, wherein the one or more user interface objects for defining the one or more conditions for the rule comprise a user interface object for setting a condition for the rule based on a subject of the received electronic mail message.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[4]] 2, wherein the one or more user interface objects for defining the one or more conditions for the rule comprise a user interface object for setting a condition for the rule based on the identity of one or more intended recipients of the electronic mail message.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[8]] 2, wherein the one or more user interface objects for defining the one or more conditions for the rule comprise a user interface object for setting a condition for the rule based on the identity of the intended recipient of the created electronic mail message.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[8]] 2, wherein the one or more user interface objects for defining the one or more conditions for the rule comprise a user interface object for setting a condition for the rule based on a subject of the created electronic mail message.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[11]] 2, wherein the one or more conditions for the rule comprise receiving an alert electronic mail message generated as a result of the alert subscription.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[13]] 2, wherein the one or more user interface objects for defining the one or more conditions for the rule comprise a user interface object for setting a condition for the rule based on the selected name.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[13]] 2, wherein the one or more user interface objects for defining the one or more conditions for the rule comprise a user interface object for setting a condition for the rule based on a subject of a received electronic mail message.

16.-17. (Cancelled)

18. (Currently Amended) A contextually sensitive user interface for defining an electronic message handling rule, the user interface comprising:
one or more user interface objects for specifying one or more conditions for the rule, the one or more user interface objects selected at least in part based upon a context in which a request to create the electronic message handling rule was received, the context corresponding to receiving the request to create the electronic message handling rule from a user interface button displayed within an electronic message reading pane and wherein the context comprises a context selected from the list comprising one of the following: reading an e-mail message, selecting a received electronic mail message, selecting an electronic mail message ready to be sent,

creating an electronic mail message, creating an alert subscription, receiving a subscription alert, and selecting a name; and

one or more user interface objects for defining one or more actions to be performed if the one or more specified conditions are satisfied.

19. (Previously Presented) The contextually sensitive user interface of Claim 18, wherein the one or more user interface objects for defining the one or more conditions for the rule comprise a user interface object for setting a condition for the rule based on the identity of a sender of the electronic mail message when the context comprises the context of reading the electronic mail message.

20. (Previously Presented) The contextually sensitive user interface of Claim 18, wherein the one or more user interface objects for defining the one or more conditions for the rule comprise a user interface object for setting a condition for the rule based on a subject of the electronic mail message when the context comprises the context of reading the electronic mail message.

21. (Previously Presented) The contextually sensitive user interface of Claim 18, wherein the one or more user interface objects for defining the one or more conditions for the rule comprise a user interface object for setting a condition for the rule based on the identity of one or more intended recipients of the electronic mail message when the context comprises the context of reading the electronic mail message.

22. (Previously Presented) The contextually sensitive user interface of Claim 18, wherein the one or more user interface objects for defining the one or more conditions for the rule comprise a user interface object for setting a condition for the rule based on the identity of the intended recipient of the electronic mail message when the context comprises the context of creating the electronic mail message.

23. (Previously Presented) The contextually sensitive user interface of Claim 18, wherein the one or more user interface objects for defining the one or more conditions for the rule comprise a user interface object for setting a condition for the rule based on a subject of the electronic mail message when the context comprises the context of creating the electronic mail message.

24. (Original) The contextually sensitive user interface of Claim 18, wherein the one or more user interface objects for defining the one or more conditions for the rule comprise a user interface object for setting a condition for the rule based on the selected name when the context comprises the context of selecting a name.

25. (Original) The contextually sensitive user interface of Claim 18, wherein the one or more user interface objects for defining the one or more conditions for the rule comprise a user interface object for setting a condition for the rule based on a subject of a received electronic mail message when the context comprises the context of selecting a name.

26.-29. (Cancelled)

30. (Previously Presented) The contextually sensitive user interface of Claim 18, wherein the contextually sensitive user interface:

displays a simplified user interface containing a subset of all actions for defining the one or more conditions and the one or more actions for handling the electronic message; and

provides a second user interface button, wherein the second user interface button is configured to provide an advanced user interface containing all of the possible actions to be performed.

31. (Previously Presented) The contextually sensitive user interface of Claim 30, wherein the simplified user interface contains at least one commonly utilized action to be performed.

32. (Currently Amended) A system for providing a user interface for defining an electronic message handling rule, the system comprising:

a memory storage; and

a processing unit coupled to the memory storage, wherein the processing unit is operative to:

receive a request to create the electronic message handling rule, wherein receiving the request to create the electronic message handling rule comprises

receiving the request to create the electronic message handling rule from a user interface button displayed within an electronic message reading pane;

in response to the request, identify a context in which the request to create the electronic message handling rule was received wherein the identified context comprises a context selected from the list comprising one of the following: reading an e-mail message, selecting a received electronic mail message, selecting an electronic mail message ready to be sent, creating an electronic mail message, creating an alert subscription, receiving a subscription alert, and selecting a name; and

providing a user interface for defining the electronic message handling rule, wherein the contents of the user interface are customized based on the identified context.

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks. Prior to entry of this response, Claims 1-15, 18-25, and 28-32 were pending in the application, of which Claims 1, 18, and 32 are independent. In the Office Action dated October 4, 2007, Claims 1-15, 18-25, and 28-32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Following this response, Claims 1-3, 5-7, 9-10, 12, 14-15, 18-25 and 30-32 remain in this application with Claims 4, 8, 11, 13, 28, and 29 being cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer by this amendment. Applicants hereby address the Examiner's rejections in turn.

I. Interview Summary

Applicants thank Examiners Long and Bashore for the courtesy of a telephone interview on December 13, 2007, requested by the undersigned to discuss the rejection of the current claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103. During the interview, Applicants asserted that the cited references did not render obvious the claims as amended. The Examiners stated that the amendment appeared to overcome the references and saw no problems with the amendment. No agreement was reached regarding patentability.

II. Rejection of the Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In the Office Action dated October 4, 2007, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-15, 18-25, and 28-32 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Syroid, et. al, Outlook 2000 In a Nutshell: A Power User's Quick Reference ("Syroid") in view of Microsoft Outlook (2000) ("Outlook") in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,101,485

("*Fortenberry*"). Claims 1, 18, and 32 have been amended, and Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments overcome this rejection and add no new matter.

Amended Claim 1 is patentably distinguishable over the cited art for at least the reason that it recites, for example, "wherein the identified context comprises a context selected from the list comprising one of the following: reading an electronic mail message, selecting a received electronic mail message, selecting an electronic mail message ready to be sent, creating an electronic mail message, creating an alert subscription, receiving a subscription alert, and selecting a name" and "providing a user interface for defining the electronic message handling rule, wherein the contents of the user interface are customized based on the identified context." Amended Claims 18 and 32 each includes a similar recitation. Support for these amendments can be found in the specification at least on page 8, lines 5-15.

In contrast, *Syroid* at least does not disclose the aforementioned recitations. For example, *Syroid* merely discloses that rule-based sorting allows a user to automatically sort and manage large e-mail volumes by applying conditional rules to incoming messages. (See *Syroid*, page 244, lines 27-29.) In *Syroid*, a user selects "Tools" from a menu bar and then selects "Rules Wizard" to open a dialog box for creating a rule. (See *Syroid*, page 246, lines 1-5; Figure 6-14.) *Syroid* further discloses that this command opens a dialog box displaying active rules and a button to start creating a new rule. (See *Syroid*, page 246; Figure 6-14.) Creating a new rule in *Syroid* requires the user to provide valid entries for all values before a rule is complete. (See *Syroid*, page 248, line 20.) In *Syroid*, a user interface for defining new rules is not customized

based on an identified context. Rather, in *Syroid*, a user must provide all values for a new rule.

In addition, *Outlook* does not overcome *Syroid's* deficiencies. *Outlook* merely discloses OUTLOOK screen shots for performing steps disclosed in *Syroid*. (See *Outlook*, Figures 1-4.) Like *Syroid*, in *Outlook* a user interface for defining new rules is not customized based on an identified context. Rather, *Outlook* merely discloses OUTLOOK screen shots for performing steps disclosed in *Syroid*.

Furthermore, *Fortenberry* does not overcome *Syroid's* and *Outlook's* deficiencies. *Fortenberry* merely discloses providing icons in an electronic mail message. (See *Fortenberry*, col. 2, lines 21-55.) *Fortenberry's* icons activate links to products available at an e-commerce site or for accessing a search utility at an e-commerce site. (See *Fortenberry*, col. 2, lines 21-55.) As in *Syroid* and *Outlook*, in *Fontenberry* a user interface for defining new rules is not customized based on an identified context. Rather, *Fontenberry* merely discloses providing icons linking to an e-commerce site in an electronic mail message.

Combining *Syroid* with *Outlook* and *Fontenberry* would not have led to the claimed invention because *Syroid*, *Outlook*, and *Fontenberry*, either individually or in combination, at least do not disclose or suggest "wherein the identified context comprises a context selected from the list comprising one of the following: reading an electronic mail message, selecting a received electronic mail message, selecting an electronic mail message ready to be sent, creating an electronic mail message, creating an alert subscription, receiving a subscription alert, and selecting a name" and "providing a user interface for defining the electronic message handling rule, wherein

the contents of the user interface are customized based on the identified context," as recited by amended Claim 1. Amended Claims 18 and 32 each includes a similar recitation. Accordingly, independent Claims 1, 18, and 32 each patentably distinguishes the present invention over the cited art, and Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection of Claims 1, 18 and 32.

Dependent Claims 2-3, 5-7, 9-10, 12, 14-15, 19-25 and 30-31 are also allowable at least for the reasons described above regarding independent Claims 1 and 18, and by virtue of their respective dependencies upon independent Claims 1 and 18. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection of dependent Claims 2-3, 5-7, 9-10, 12, 14-15, 19-25 and 30-31.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request the reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims. The preceding arguments are based only on the arguments in the Office Action, and therefore do not address patentable aspects of the invention that were not addressed by the Examiner in the Office Action. The claims may include other elements that are not shown, taught, or suggested by the cited art. Accordingly, the preceding argument in favor of patentability is advanced without prejudice to other bases of patentability. Furthermore, the Office Action contains a number of statements reflecting characterizations of the related art and the claims. Regardless of whether any such statement is identified herein, Applicants decline to automatically subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge
any additional required fees to our deposit account 13-2725.

Respectfully submitted,
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